

Good Morning Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers and Representative Steinberg and distinguished members of the [Public Health Committee](#):

My name is Dr. Queenie Abad and I am from New Haven, CT. I am a physician at the Yale Adult Primary Care Clinic at the Saint Raphael Campus.

I stand in support of HB-5764 AN ACT CONCERNING THE LICENSING OF BARBERS AND HAIRDRESSERS, which will remove criminal history restrictions from licensing applications for individuals seeking to become barbers and hairdressers.

As a physician who takes care of patients in a clinic that serves a predominantly underserved patient population, I see how financial instability, housing insecurity, and food insecurity contributes to the maladies my patients suffer. The ability to work and earn money is directly tied to whether someone can afford to have a roof over their head, and whether someone can have access to good nutrition and water, not to mention whether they can afford medications or go to the doctor. These social determinants of health are the biggest factors which dictate how challenging treating someone's diabetes, hypertension, recurrent infections, anxiety, or depression becomes.

When previously incarcerated individuals return to their communities, their biggest challenge is finding employment. Criminal history restrictions from licensing applications for individuals seeking to become barbers and hairdressers is a harmful and unnecessary barrier which has implications on not just the individual seeking employment, but to the community as well. Many previously incarcerated individuals receive training in skills they can use to become barbers or hairdressers in preparation for success once they are released to their communities. People who have been previously convicted of a crime have paid their debt to society after being imprisoned. It is inhumane to then subject them to a life of unemployment in the form of putting up unnecessary barriers such as criminal history restrictions preventing them from applying for licenses.

People want to have an opportunity for meaningful work. You can help ensure that people have the resources to be able to care of themselves and their families by supporting this bill.

I support HB-5764 AN ACT CONCERNING THE LICENSING OF BARBERS AND HAIRDRESSERS and hope the committee will vote favorably to reduce barriers for communities that face discrimination because of their records.

Thank you for your time,

Dr. Queenie Abad
Yale Primary Care Internal Medicine